

CASIO'S BACKSTORY

The Storied Bard of Senaliesse

THE EARLY DAYS

Casio was born human and became a catboy after being whisked away to the Feywild.



(Baby Casio, long before he became a catboy.)

Before he was fey touched, Casio grew up in an orphanage; however, he ran away to live on the streets after things at the orphanarium took a magically dark and dire turn.

Eventually, he was taken in by a kind elderly man named **Nico**. Casio had been stealing food from the old man's garden and taking shelter near his small house. Nico noticed this rather quickly, and began leaving out food and blankets and clothing on purpose for the strange little

stray. On a particularly cold and rainy day, Nico was finally able to convince Casio to come inside. That was the moment the (future) catboy first found home.



(Nico, Casio's adoptive father.)

Casio discovered his passion for music during their time together. Nico, a luthier by trade, taught him how to play and how to craft a violin by hand. The two spent many lovely and cozy years together, and Casio came to regard Nico as a father figure.

After Nico passed, Casio set out to travel the world as a bard, playing in taverns and various towns. It was both a way to escape his grief and a way to indulge in his natural desire to explore the big, wide world—a wish Nico had always wanted him to pursue; though, Casio never liked to stray too far from the old man's side while he was alive.



(Young adult Casio around the time he set out to travel the world.)

A fateful, chance encounter with a fey Prince (an archfey of *mischief*, *mirth*, and *music*) changed everything. The two found each other through a magical connection—as if their very souls were harmonizing the moment they heard the other's music. One night, at a fey crossing,

Casio and the Prince played a charged musical duet together, and it was then that Casio's entire life took a magical turn.

Prince Damh swept Casio off his feet and into the Feywild for a wild night of revelry in the *Summer Court*. That night stretched into many, many more, and Casio ended up becoming a full-time resident of the Feywild, attending the **College of Glamour** as a student.

Over time, Casio became increasingly more fey and began to transform into a catboy. The Feywild is said to bring out a person's *true self*, and Casio had always been a scrappy little stray, after all.





Casio and Prince Damh were inseparable. Their natural connection through music blossomed into a beautiful and true romance that transcended all else. They planned to create their own domain together—to have Casio join the archfey's *Heartbound Court*, where they'd be connected for eternity.

Their fate, however, was twisted by a jealous witch and a group of hags who worked together to trick the two lovers into a trap that has separated them for many, *many* long years.



(The witch and her three hag sisters who worked in tandem to trick and curse Casio and Damh.)

A deceitful fey bargain stole all of Casio's memories of the Prince and cast him out of the Feywild entirely, leaving him confused and lost with an unexplainable emptiness in his heart. He couldn't recall how he'd gotten to the Feywild in the first place, he didn't remember much of his time there, and he didn't understand why he'd been thrown back into the material plane.

The witch, meanwhile, disguised herself as Casio and tricked the Prince into willingly giving his heart to her. Without a heart, Damh's body wandered and eventually ended up in the *Gloaming Court* (enemy territory of the *Summer Court*), where he transformed into a great and terrible creature of legend: the **Beast of the Gloamwood**.

Damh's heart, meanwhile, was harnessed as a source of power for the witch, and he remained separated from his body as well as his family and friends—unable to tell anyone where he was and unable to reach Casio.

Time, however, moved differently between the two realms.

For Casio, only a few years went by as he wandered the material plane once again—this time searching for answers to the emptiness that stirred in his heart while trying to find his way back to the Feywild. For Damh, ages and lifetimes passed in solitary exile, but he never stopped trying to call out to Casio and never gave up the hope that they would one day be reunited, despite the tragedy that had played out around them.

WHEN THE CAMPAIGN STARTED...

At the beginning of the D&D campaign, Casio had been experiencing strange dreams of an endless, sprawling palace—alive, bursting with life, and so strangely familiar—since his exile from the Feywild. The dream began with him entering into a grand ballroom where a raucous masquerade was in full swing. Parts of the dream were clearer than others. Somehow it felt less like a product of his mind and more like a memory of something important that he'd forgotten.

The dream always ended the same way. A voice behind him would ask "may I have this dance?", and as soon as Casio turned towards its source, the dream would dissolve; however, this time (at the start of the campaign) the dream didn't end when he turned around. Standing before him was a strange figure he didn't recognize: a tall, dark shadowed man wearing an elegant mask.



(The shadowed figure from Casio's dreams.)

The figure seemed to know Casio despite the catboy having no idea of who he was. The jovial stranger bid him follow his music to the realm of *Prismeer*, where his lost memories (and more) awaited him.

Casio awoke from the dream with a renewed sense of determination and an eagerness to learn more about the figure he'd finally been able to see and speak to.

With a little help from some new adventuring friends, he was finally able to return to the Feywild—albeit a part of it that was unraveling and ravaged with problems of its own. Prismeer, it turned out, was controlled by the very same hags who tricked Casio and the Prince all those many years ago, and their fates are deeply intertwined with the world and people in it.

As of writing this, Casio was able to fully restore his memories of the Prince, and the two of them have been able to share dreams together to speak and make plans in the ongoing campaign.

The moment Casio got his memories back, he joined Damh in a dream and the two of them were at last able to hold a ceremony to join together in their promised Heartbound Court. Their hearts have united as one, and even though they're apart, they can always feel each other from a distance.



(Having restored his memories, Casio was finally able to see Damh in his dreams.)

For reference:

- Casio finally restored his missing memories of the Prince in Session #26 of the campaign.
- To date, our most recent game was Session #92.

Prince Damh, however, is still a heart separated from his body, and Casio is still on an ongoing quest to restore Damh to his full self.

PRINCE DAMH, THE BEAST OF THE GLOAMWOOD

Prince Damh is the son of **Queen Titania** and **King Oberon**. He is the archfey of *mirth*, *mischief*, and *music*, as well as the guardian of *centaurs*, *satyrs*, and *korreds*.

Separated from his heart, Damh's body wandered the Feywild, eventually ending up in the Gloamwood where he transformed into the "Beast of Gloamwood".



(The Beast of the Gloamwood in the present day.)

The Gloamwood is ruled by the evil **Queen of Air and Darkness**—Queen Titania's other half, and, for lack of a better word, Damh's "Aunt". She has used some sort of dark magic on the Beast as a means of controlling him, hence the swirling, black collar around his neck.

The Beast of the Gloamwood is a guardian of the woods, and a creature of legend. He keeps his distance from those he protects, and eye-witness accounts of his appearance are never consistent, seemingly implying he is constantly shape shifting.

His past as a Prince of the Summer Court has been either long forgotten or remains a vague folktale among the people of the Gloaming Court. There are, however, rumors that have begun to grow over the years about the Beast's true identity, and from those rumors blossomed a loyal group called the **Band of Beasts**.

THE BAND OF BEASTS

The Band of Beasts is a rowdy entourage of musical bandits who travel back and forth between the Feywild and the material plane, stealing from the rich, and giving to themselves.

The group, for the most part, enjoys simple pleasures: revelry, stockpiling their gilded camp with treasures both mundane and magical, and throwing massive, indulgent parties with ridiculous amounts of food and wine. These parties have become huge events that always end in an explosively joyful concert of music and dance.

The leader of the Band of Beasts is a huge, jolly satyr by the name of **Clade**. Clade had spent years as a washed up alcoholic "working" as a bouncer at a bar. He'd hit rock bottom, and was truly lost... until a fateful and mystical encounter with the Beast of the Gloamwood completely changed his life.

After a dream/vision where he was visited by the Beast of the Gloamwood, Clade became his biggest and most devoted fan. In the pits of his despair, he'd called out for help, and the Beast had answered. This event was the catalyst for creating the Band of Beasts.

Clade quickly gained a reputation for his ability to seemingly "commune" with the Beast of the Gloamwood. The music played by his band had attracted the Beast's attention, and Clade himself had apparently been the only person able to get close to the Beast without drawing its ire. This unique relationship eventually earned him the nickname "**Beast Caller Clade**".



(Beast Caller Clade, the “Archfey” of Headaches and Hangovers.)

Though Clade had connected with the Beast, he was completely unaware of its true nature or identity. The only thing he knew for certain was that the Beast seemed sad, and had shown Clade a flash of humanity that had driven the satyr to fully turn his life around for the better.

It wasn't until he met Casio that he'd start to get a fuller picture of the creature he admired; though, Casio had initially been less than thrilled by the rumors of a man who had a reputation for “hanging out” with the catboy's long-lost Fey husband—especially when the Beast's backstory was a thing of legend unknown to most people.

Luckily for both Casio and Clade, they quickly found welcomed common ground and formed a deep bond that encapsulated their desires to help the Prince/Beast, respectively.

CASIO & THE CLASH OF COURTS

Casio's other purpose for being in the Gloamwood, aside from searching for Damh's wayward body, was to participate in a tournament the Queen had crafted: the **Clash of Courts**.

“The Gloamwood calls upon its vassal courts to attend a Masquerade of Mockery moste grande! A new dusk falls for the Queen and Her loyal servants. Flock to Hollow Nocturn, lest you provoke your Ruler's wrath.

Reward and revelry awaits—the winner of the Clash of Courts shall wear a Gloaming crown!”

Once upon a time, and every so often, the Gloamwood held a Masquerade of Mockery. This event always simultaneously took place whenever a wild festival was held in the Summer Court. Courts from around the Feywild competed in a series of games and competitions, and the winning team was granted a wish by the Queen herself.

This year, however, the Queen's game is fraught with dubious intent and dark shadows at its edges. The party is unaware of its true nature or purpose, but the game is very unlike any that have been held in the past. For one thing, this latest Masquerade is the first one that isn't being held at the same time as a Summer Court celebration. Additionally, a “Gloaming crown” has never been offered as a prize in previous Clashes.

Casio's team (dubbed the “Twilight Court”) was able to join the Clash on a technicality, and if *they* win, the Queen has agreed to let the Beast “decide for himself” if he will leave the Gloamwood with Casio or continue to be its bestial protector. It remains to be seen if she will truly make good on that promise. So far, the evil Queen of Air and Darkness has not shied away from tipping the scales in her favor. It's likely that she has complete confidence that her own Gloaming Court champions will easily take the win in the Clash.

The Clash of Courts Breakdown:

- There are **five teams** competing.
 - Each team is made up of three members.
 - The teams represent their home Courts.
- **Eight Archfey** are in charge of the games.
 - There are 8 different “Clashes” in total, each one run by a different Archfey.

- The Archfey running the games are called “Masks”.
- Each Mask has a “gift” and a “curse” unique to them that they can bestow upon the players.
- A player who has received a Mask’s gift is known as a “Knight”.
- A Knight must “pay a price” to receive the Mask’s favor (see example below).
- A Mask sponsoring the winner of the Clash is also granted an audience with the Queen.
- **Beast Caller Clade** is the Mask of Revelry this year, and has sponsored Casio in the game—nominating him to be his *Knight of Revelry*.



(The revealed Masks of the Clash thus far.)

Mask of Revelry



BEAST CALLER CLADE

"Archfey" of Headaches and Hangovers

Gift

While you're wearing the Mask of Revelry at a party, you have advantage on all D20 tests. Whenever you drink a potion while wearing the Mask of Revelry, you gain the benefits of the *Disengage* and *Dodge* actions.

Price

Beast Caller Clade and his friends have an open invitation to hang out with you and crash at your place for the duration of the Clash.

(Beast Caller Clade's Mask of Revelry power and price.)

As of the latest session, the heroes are in the midst of the first Clash of the Game: the **Clash of Treachery**. The Clash of Treachery is essentially a scavenger hunt where stealing the desired items from other teams is encouraged.

There are four items being sought after:

- **Moonshine**, the *Lunar Grail*.
- **Snicker-Snack**, the *dragon slaying sword*.
- **Malabog's Finger**, the cursed finger of the *Fomorian King*.
- **Umbriel**, the *wayward name*.

It just so happened that the Band of Beasts had come into possession of one of the four scavenger hunt items: **Moonshine the Lunar Grail** (which can be seen in Clade's hand in the art above). Casio had been wanting to meet this confounding "Beast Caller" for a long time, so the team headed East in the Gloamwood forests to attend one of the group's famous satyr party celebrations.

After Casio consistently impressed him throughout the night, Beast Caller Clade nominated the Summer Court partyboy to officially be his Knight of Revelry. To Clade, the catboy simply embodied revelry and everything it stood for. For Casio, it had been his first time attending a satyr party since his long lost days with Damh, and he had vowed to "make the Prince proud" in his absence.



(Casio wearing the mask of Revelry.)

Casio had rankled upon first meeting the jolly satyr, but the two quickly hit it off after Clade recounted his endearing story about calling out for help in his darkest hour and being answered by a visit from the Beast. What had, at first, sounded like some sort of odd scam or strange lie that Clade was telling for clout had actually turned out to be a rather heartfelt and meaningful moment that Casio was grateful to hear about. Even as a heartless beast, Damh was still making connections with people, and the fact that the Band of Beast's musical concerts were something that seemed to attract the Beast of the Gloamwood's attention just further proved to Casio that his Prince was still, somewhere deep down, himself.

Casio hadn't told Clade anything about his own connection to the Beast, or its true identity as a prince of the Summer Court. Instead, he simply stated that if Clade let him play in his band that night at the party, Casio was *certain* that the Beast would get closer to the camp than ever before.

After a series of impressive party game wins, Clade bestowed Moonshine onto the Twilight Court as a prize for their revelry. He then turned to Casio and explained that the catboy was everything he'd been looking for in a Clash contestant, and pulled the two of them into a private, dream-like ceremony to offer Casio his Mask's gift.

Before accepting, Casio took Clade's hand and placed it to his own chest, revealing the soaring sensation of an unrealized Heartbound Court brimming with boundless potential. Though Clade couldn't fully identify the truth behind the feeling, he knew right away that Casio was truly someone incredibly special. Through tears, he pleaded for the bard to accept his Mask's gift, and Casio happily obliged.



(The Mask and Knight of Revelry, side by side.)

CASIO & THE BEAST OF THE GLOAMWOOD

That evening at the party, Casio poured his heart into an explosive musical performance for the Beast of the Gloamwood. Damh and Casio had always communicated emotion and feeling through music, and this song was no exception. Everyone in the crowd could sense the deep heartache and sadness Casio was feeling as he played.

Just as Casio had predicted, his music and connection to the Prince's Heartbound Court had drawn the Beast closer to the camp than ever before. Without a second thought, Casio ran

as fast as he could to meet the long lost body of his beloved Prince in a nearby clearing in the woods. Clade and a few of Casio's companions gave chase as well, and would play witness to the reunion.



(Casio running to meet the Beast for the first time.)

Carrying an echo of Damh's heart with him through their Heartbound Court, Casio attempted to bridge the gap and connect Damh and his body once more. A sudden, unexpected clashing of emotions flooded through the trio.

The Beast was believed to be an emotionless husk—a feral, wild animal lacking humanity. A creature without its heart usually loses the ability to feel emotion, but the Beast of the Gloamwood was bursting with immense anger and sorrow. Negative thoughts of betrayal and hatred and indescribable pain pierced Casio's heart like a knife. The Beast was furious. It felt left behind and abandoned by its loved ones.

Shameful resentment towards Casio bubble to the surface:

"Where were you?"

"Come find me."

"Why didn't you come save me?"

The Damh that Casio had been talking to—the one who had beckoned him back to the Feywild and stayed by the Bard's side as he fought to reclaim his memories—was only half of the man Casio had known before losing his memories.

Somehow, the Beast had seemingly been saddled with all of the negative emotions that come with having your heart stolen and losing the life you once had with the person you loved the most. The Beast was immediately overwhelmed by the positive and loving emotions that Casio and Damh's heart had tried to share in return, and in the confusion, lashed out and attacked Casio.

The bard, however, stood his ground and let all of the Beast's negative emotions flood through him. As the Beast bit into his shoulder, Casio reached up and held the side of its muzzle, gently whispering words of compassion and understanding. After a moment, the Beast relented the attack and nuzzled into the embrace.

Casio promised he would save him, assuring Damh's wayward body that he was there for him, and wouldn't be going anywhere until he made things right.

"I know you've waited a long time... please just wait a little longer."

Then their reunion was broken as the Beast's attention was drawn away to an intruder somewhere deeper in the forest. It took off towards the source of the sound, leaving Casio behind and in shock.

Clade was in complete and utter disbelief. As a person who loved and respected the Beast, the satyr still had a healthy fear of it, and was worried for Casio's safety. As far as Clade knew, no one had ever been able to get as close to the Beast of the Gloamwood as he had, so watching Casio's interaction was mind blowing.

Casio decided to trust Clade (they'd already had several meaningful moments of connection throughout the night, after all), and disclosed the truth about the Beast to Clade. He explained that it was the heartless body of a long forgotten Summer Court Prince, and that he and Damh were lovers who had been torn apart by twisted fate. Casio also elaborated about his connection to Damh's Heartbound Court, which Clade did fanboy about.

"Y-You're in the... the Heartbound Court of the Beast of the Gloamwood!?"

Clade reaffirmed his vow to help Casio and the Twilight Court, stating again that he knew the bard was special and that he wanted to be a part of his story—especially if it helped the Beast. Clade had sensed a sadness in the Beast, and Casio was the answer to its origins. Their connection was truly meant to be, and the Band of Beasts would be there to help support the lovers in any way they could.

FINAL WORD



So, that's a *very* expedited and shortened version of the overarching events and important aspects to Casio's character in our D&D game!

When I say this doesn't even scratch the surface of things, I mean it. It was a very difficult process trying to decide what to include, and there's so much more I didn't even touch on that is fundamental to the character and campaign.



I hope this was a good first dive though! I'd definitely like to do more of these lore drops about other aspects or character relationships in the campaign. D&D has been my huge creative outlet for a while now, but it's always hard to share things out of context. I'm hoping this lore document will make any future art I share even more enjoyable from an outsider's perspective.

Thanks for reading!

FOR MORE CASIO AND COMPANY...



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THANKS AGAIN FOR READING!

